





Contents

I. Letter from the Director	4
II. The Coastal Program Mission	5
III. Accomplishments	7
Supporting Maine's Coastal Communities	7
Sustaining the Health of Coastal Watersheds and Habitats	10
Encouraging Citizen Stewardship	11
Creating New Tools for Coastal Management	13
Publications	16
Conferences Supported	17
IV. 2002-2003 Budget	18
V. Staff	19



Published May 2004. Funding for this report was provided by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, under the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) of 1972, as amended. CZMA is administered in Maine by the State Planning Office's Maine Coastal Program.

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Design: Headwaters Writing & Design (www.hwaters.com)

Maine Coastal Program Accomplishments 2002-2003

Letter from the Director



May 2004

Much like the craggy contours of Maine's convoluted coastline, the challenge of promoting conservation and economic development is intricate and complex. At the Maine Coastal Program, we work with numerous and varied partners toward the shared goal of healthy and vibrant coastal communities.

With a core staff based at the Maine State Planning Office, the Coastal Program also includes various "networked" state agencies, coastal municipalities, regional planning commissions and many non-governmental partner organizations.

Each year we distribute over two million dollars in Federal funds—matched by state and local resources—in our efforts to remediate coastal pollution, improve regulatory oversight, promote smarter municipal planning, foster the economic health of coastal towns, involve citizens in caring for the coast, and address other high-priority issues. We also continue to improve the management tools available such as aerial imagery, mapping technology, and methods for evaluating development impacts. We experiment with promising new areas of policy, envisioning better methods for siting aquaculture facilities, for example, and developing more effective ways of managing fisheries.

Are we successful in meeting our goals? Looking back is a good thing to do occasionally, and we've done just that in preparing this summary of our achievements over the last two years. We hope you agree that we've made progress in many key areas and we look forward to your input about how we might better achieve our goals. Please contact us at 207-287-1486, e-mail us at lorraine.lessard@maine.gov, or visit our website at www.mainecoastalprogram.org.

Sincerely,

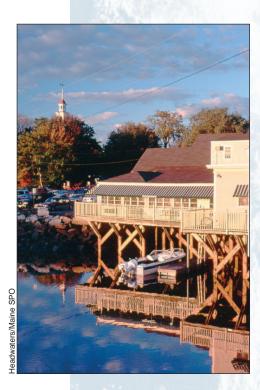
Kathleen Leyden

Director, Maine Coastal Program

The Coastal Program Mission

The Maine Coastal Program works to sustain coastal resources and enhance the maritime economy by:

- whelping citizens and municipal officials reduce nonpoint source pollution
- wbuilding vibrant, healthy communities and maintaining coastal character
- wbuilding and strengthening local officials' capacity to administer and enforce regulations
- retaining and improving access for water-dependent businesses
- managing marine resources in ways that are biologically and socially sound
- wrestoring wetlands and other coastal habitats
- reserving Maine's sand beaches for storm protection, habitat conservation, and public recreation
- whelping Maine citizens become active coastal stewards





The Coastal Program provides staff support to the Land for Maine's Future Program for land acquisition projects in the coastal zone. LMF funds enabled the town of Machiasport to purchase Pettegrow Beach, securing permanent public access to a site with sufficiently deep water at low tide—a critical requirement for those who need to lobster, long-line or harvest shellfish.

Accomplishments

Supporting Maine's Coastal Communities

From Kittery to Calais, Maine's coastal communities face tough challenges in the twenty-first century—from sprawling development and runoff pollution, to shrinking habitat and eroding shoreline. More than 136 cities and towns lie in Maine's coastal zone, which extends from three miles offshore (including hundreds of islands) inland to Augusta and Bangor. The Maine Coastal Program (MCP) strives to help these communities thrive economically while safeguarding their valuable resources, habitats and quality of life, as the following accomplishments attest:

*Helped Launch Working Waterfront Coalition

The Coastal Program was a founding partner in the Working Waterfront Coalition, a statewide alliance of concerned individuals and organizations resolved to help marine-related industries retain their place along Maine's waterfront. To help coastal towns protect working waterfronts, the Coastal Program provides technical support, workshops, and web resources, and steers towns towards water access grant opportunities. MCP provided two grants for working waterfront projects in 2002/2003 to Rockland and Jonesboro. Rockland analyzed several options for improving municipal management of their fish pier, while Jonesboro completed an engineering evaluation and preliminary design for refurbishing the Town's commercial fishing pier and an adjacent property.



Shore access has become an increasingly precious commodity for Maine's fishing industry.

Preserved and Restored Public Access to Water

The Coastal Program works with the Land for Maine's Future Program to preserve public shore access in coastal towns. In 2002-2003, MCP staff assisted with the following acquisitions:

- Gardiner Waterfront Park
- Devils Head, Calais
- Merepoint Water Access Site, Brunswick
- •Morong Cove, Lubec
- Pettegrow Beach (Bucks Harbor), Machiasport

- Presumpscot River, Falmouth and Portland
- Robinson Woods, Cape Elizabeth
- •Tidal Falls, Hancock
- •Mill Pond Park, Swans Island

In addition, the Coastal Program's Right-of-Way Discovery Grant program awarded funds to the following towns to help maintain and/or secure public access to water:

- Freeport
- Harpswell
- Islesboro
- Milbridge
- Tremont

™Provided Code Enforcement Officer Training

The Coastal Program supported the State of Maine's Municipal Code Enforcement Officer (CEO) Training Program, which provides specialized professional training to code enforcement officials. The program provides initial training and certification as well as continuing education to ensure that CEOs are kept current on land use, shoreland zoning, and plumbing and building standards. The rate of compliance for certified code officers in coastal towns rose to 97 percent in 2003.

Published Planning Guides for Towns

MCP developed three publications in 2003 to help communities better manage growth. *The Community Visioning Handbook* provides a process for town residents to imagine their best possible future and to craft a comprehensive plan that brings that vision alive. *Financing Infrastructure Improvements Through Impact Fees* helps Maine municipalities fund some of the public costs associated with residential development. *The Land Stewardship Incentives*

and Education Project Report presents ways that towns can help manage growth using

incentives instead of regulations.

™Awarded Regional Challenge Grants

The Coastal Program awarded a regional challenge grant for a smart growth project to the East Cumberland County Consolidation Study. In this project, the towns of Falmouth, Yarmouth, Cumberland, North Yarmouth and Freeport explored methods to share municipal services within the region. The Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission also received smart growth funds to analyze the potential effects of the proposed resort casino and to create a regional plan.



Code enforcement officers benefit from hands-on training at a subsurface wastewater demonstration site.

Community Visioning Handbook

How to Imagine - and Create - a Better Future



The Community Visioning Handbook helps communities better manage growth.

Supported Shoreland Zoning Regulations

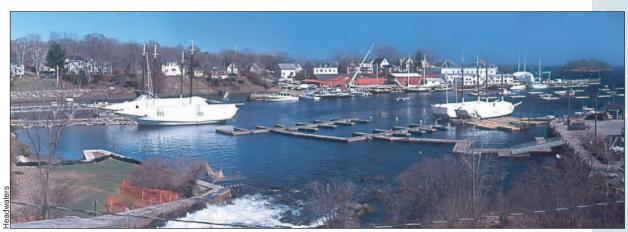
The Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), with funding from MCP, continued to help municipalities improve shoreland zoning. In 2002-2003, DEP staff trained several hundred code enforcement officials and realtors, sent a quarterly newsletter to municipal officials, and reviewed several hundred existing shoreland zoning ordinances and amendments. Staff also began developing guidelines for recreational trails to ensure that paths in shoreland areas are properly constructed.

*Provided Towns with Information on Wasterwater Alternatives Technology

Many coastal towns want to "develop smarter" by concentrating residential development in village growth areas, but are hampered by poor soils and/or inadequate funding for public sewer and water improvements. The Coastal Program funded the development of an important addition to Maine's "Smart Growth Toolbox," a set of resource materials designed to help communities explore a variety of wastewater treatment options for village development.

~Facilitated Maintenance Dredging Projects in Camden, Rockland, Belfast, and Kennebec River

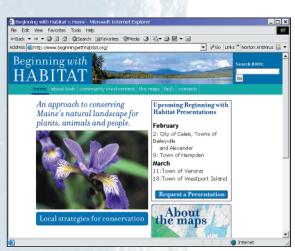
Periodic dredging of Maine's ports and harbors is vital to marine-related commerce and recreation. During 2002-2003, MCP staff and partner agencies worked with federal agencies to complete maintenance dredging projects in Camden, Rockland, Belfast, and along the Kennebec River.



The Coastal Program helped facilitate a two-year dredging project to maintain navigation in Camden Harbor.



The Maine Healthy Beaches Project included a public education compaign.



Maine's "Beginning with Habitat" program received an Environmental Merit Award from the EPA for its innovative approach to community planning, which includes this web site (www.beginningwithhabitat.org).

Sustaining the Health of Coastal Watersheds and Habitats

The rivers, estuaries, and coastal waters of Maine are extraordinarily beautiful, rich and economically vital resources, supporting a wide variety of life. The Coastal Program works closely with watershed groups to monitor water quality, identify sources of polluted runoff, develop watershed management plans, and educate residents about how they can help reduce coastal pollution. In addition, the Program protects and restores important habitat areas in coastal watersheds, as the following accomplishments demonstrate:

WHosted International Conference on Managing Stormwater in Cold Climates

The Coastal Program co-chaired and co-sponsored a conference on cold-climate stormwater management. "Stormwater Management in Cold Climates: Planning, Design, and Implementation" (www.cascobay.usm.maine.edu/coldsw.html) was the first international North American Conference dedicated specifically to this topic, featuring 55 presenters and drawing 375 participants from six countries.

Launched Maine Healthy Beaches Initiative

In partnership with other organizations, the Coastal Program launched the Maine Healthy Beaches program in 2002 to help ensure that the state's swim beaches remain safe and clean. The program monitors water quality, notifies the public if health risks are detected, and educates residents and visitors on what they can do to avoid water-related illness at the beach.

[™]Supported "Beginning with Habitat" Program

"Beginning with Habitat," a landscape approach to assessing wildlife and plant conservation needs and opportunities, is made possible in part by Coastal Program funds and staff. "Beginning with Habitat" aims to maintain sufficient habitat to support all native plant and animal species currently breeding in Maine by providing each Maine town with a collection of maps and information on significant habitats in their area and technical assistance needed to understand and use this information. Presentations introducing the project were given in over 60 towns.

~Restored Habitat

Restoring habitat, particularly in economically valuable fisheries, was a primary Coastal Program objective in 2002-2003. The Program facilitated 6 coastal habitat conservation projects that will restore 50 acres of salt marsh, 35 miles of riverine habitat for anadromous fish and 40 acres of tidal mudflats. Significant highlights include:

- provided a small matching grant to assist with the removal of Smelt Hill Dam on the Presumpscot River Estuary, opening seven miles of riverine habitat above the head of tide to anadromous fish
- •assisted with a project to restore fish runs below Sebasticook Lake

Encouraging Citizen Stewardship

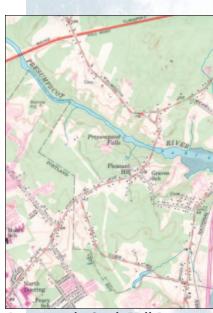
No amount of regulation, money, or technology can rival the potential force of informed, involved citizens caring for their coast. The Coastal Program educates the public about coastal pollution, inspires good stewardship, and supports programs in which dedicated local volunteers monitor water quality to identify problems, clean up shores, and undertake a host of community projects. The following section highlights how the Program provided this support and education in 2002-2003:

Supported Shore Stewards Program

The Coastal Program continued its partnership in the Shore Stewards Program, organizing volunteer water quality monitoring. MCP awarded its annual grants to reduce nonpoint source pollution in priority watersheds to the following recipients:

- York County Soil and Water Conservation District
- Presumpscot River Watch
- ●Town of Freeport
- ●Town of Brunswick
- Sheepscot Valley Conservation Association
- Friends of the Medomak Watershed/ Medomak Valley Land Trust
- Cove Brook Watershed Council/Project SHARE
- Union River Watershed Coalition

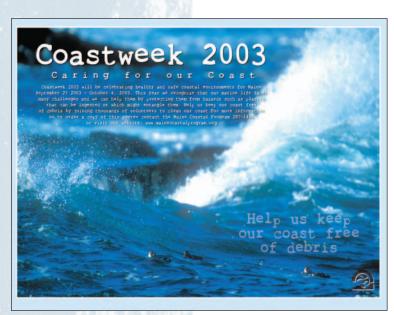
- Mount Desert Island Water Quality Coalition
- Washington County Council of Governments
- Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District
- Friends of the Medomak Watershed
- Georges River Land Trust
- Sheepscot Valley Conservation Association
- Northern New England Chapter of the Surfrider Foundation
- Yarmouth Conservation Commission



Removing the Smelt Hill Dam on the lower Presumpscot River allowed anadromous fish to swim above the head of tide for the first time since the eighteenth century.



A student in the MCP-sponsored Rippleffect program doing field work on a Casco Bay island.



Coastweek has become an annual rite of Fall in Maine.

These grants ranged from \$5,000 to \$15,000 and funded a wide variety of activities, including installation of pet waste collection stations, collection of new water quality data, distribution of guidebooks for shorefront residents, and creation of watershed management plans.

™Rippleffect

In a new partnership, MCP is helping the environmental nonprofit organization, Rippleffect, create a citizen stewardship project in Casco Bay. Rippleffect involves kayak guides, community members, students, and volunteers in water quality monitoring, habitat studies, and "Leave No Trace" guidelines.

Supported Coastal Stewards Program

The Coastal Stewards Program, run by MCP in partnership with other organizations, is an adult education program that provides Maine residents with in-depth information about their region in exchange for a commitment of volunteer time. The program was expanded to include the St. Croix Stewards and the Midcoast Stewards in addition to the Penobscot Bay Stewards.

The Pen Bay program now has over 100 alumni; Midcoast Stewards contributed 1,290 volunteer monitoring hours; while 18 participants in the St. Croix contributed 540 hours.

Coastweek

Each fall for two decades, the Coastal Program has organized a Coastweek celebration and coastwide cleanup. In 2002 and 2003, 5,121 volunteers covered 236.5 miles of coastline and gathered over 12 tons of marine debris. Cigarette filters, plastic packaging, and fishing-related materials continue to top the list of trash.

Creating New Tools for Coastal Management

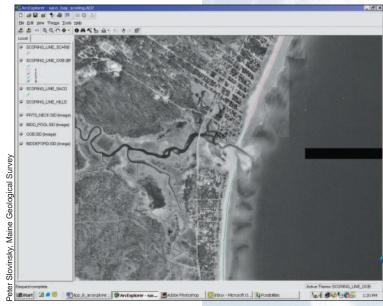
Successfully managing resources is a dynamic process of learning, adapting, and improving our approach. Science and technology are integral to this process, but ultimately management decisions about how best to maintain a sustainable fishery or protect a shoreline from erosion are made by people—often with diverse perspectives—working together and forming a consensus. The accomplishments listed below show how the Coastal Program works to facilitate these collaborations:

[™]Developed Beach Management Scoring System

The Coastal Program funded a new planning tool designed to help municipal officials, permit-issuing agencies, and others make sound management decisions along Saco Bay, Maine's longest contiguous sandy shoreline. Called "The Beach Management Scoring System," the project evaluated the Bay's shoreline and assigned a score indicating overall management needs to different sections of shoreline. To package the data in a convenient form decision-makers can easily use, the project team from the Maine Geological Survey created a GIS map showing the entire shoreline with a color-coded scoring system.

Clarified Rules for Visual Resource Assessment

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection developed rules for protecting the aesthetic quality of significant natural settings. The new rules codify, standardize, and streamline the decision-making process regarding scenic and aesthetic values.



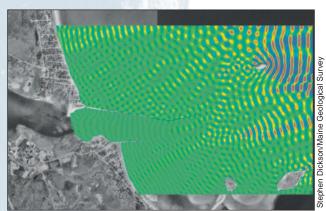
Aerial photos overlaid with colored data indicators, like this one depicting a portion of Saco Bay, will help decision-makers manage Maine's beach areas.



Maine's Visual Resource Assessment rules will help minimize the aesthetic impacts of construction projects in significant areas.



Scallop harvesters and other industry stakeholders played an active role in establishing new rules designed to improve management of the fishery.



Computer-generated ocean wave modeling is helping managers design a solution to the beach erosion at Camp Ellis.

*Developed Cooperative Scallop Management Plan

The Coastal Program supported a cooperative forum for improving scallop management that culminated in a set of new harvesting rules and practices. An *ad hoc* scallop committee, composed of fishermen, other industry members, and regulators, focused on identifying measures that would improve the fishery's overall biological health. New regulations were established along with a Scallop Advisory Council and a license surcharge to fund scallop research.

[™]Obtained Aerial High-Resolution Digital Imagery

Venturing into cutting-edge digital imaging technology, the Coastal Program hired a contractor to produce aerial images along the Maine coast in a high-resolution digital format. Taken from an airplane in the summer of 2003, the full-color images show detail up to 1.5 feet. These images, which are licensed for use by state agencies and local municipalities, will be a valuable tool for land-use planning, habitat protection and restoration, and other coastal management issues.

Supported Aquaculture Task Force

After the State Legislature established an Aquaculture Task Force in 2003, the Coastal Program provided staffing and monetary support for their efforts. Recognizing the limitations of the current leasing process and the need for greater community involvement, the Task Force set out to improve the planning and regulatory process and support the growth of the industry in an economically and ecologically sustainable way. After six months of intensive work, the task force issued its findings in December 2003.

*Developed Plan to Remediate Beach Erosion at Camp Ellis

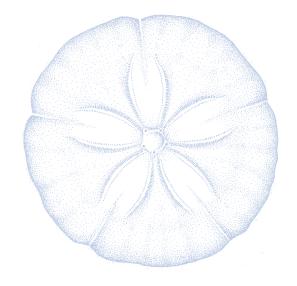
The Maine Department of Conservation worked with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to develop a plan to remedy chronic erosion at Camp Ellis caused by the Saco River jetty. Using computerized modeling to detail how wave action is affected by the jetty, the Corps is evaluating a variety of alternatives including combinations of coastal engineering and beach nourishment.

*Developed Coastal Training and Information Programs

The Coastal Program supported the Coastal Training and Information Program at the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve. Municipal officials and community-based conservation groups are the main audience and topics have included habitat restoration, watershed management and land-use planning. Since the program's inception in 2003, more than 400 coastal decision-makers have participated in workshops, conferences and seminars.

Created Maine's Geo-Library

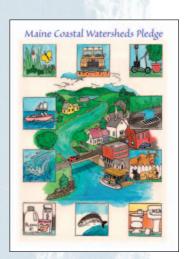
The Coastal Program funded the creation of a blueprint for developing a stronger statewide Geographic Information System. MCP staff helped Maine's Legislature establish the Maine Geo-Library (a public library of geographic information). The Legislature's actions to create a new funding source for the Geo-Library will address gaps in technology and data, increase coordination between the state and local and regional governments, and create uniform standards for data.





Paul Dest, Manager of the Wells Reserve, works with a group from Kennebunk at a Coastal Training and Information Seminar.





Publications

Coastweek poster, 2002 and 2003

Community Systems—Water and Wastewater, 2003

Community Visioning Handbook: How to Imagine—and Create—a Better Future, 2003

Comprehensive Plan Update Manual, 2003

Comprehensive Planning: Tips for the Road (video), 2003

Gulf of Maine Times editorial contributions (newspaper), 2002 and 2003

Indicators of Livable Communities, 2002

Land Stewardship Resource Guide, 2003

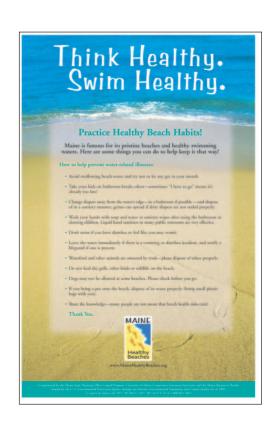
Maine Coastline (newsletter), 2002 and 2003

Maine Healthy Beaches: A Guide to Safer Swimming in Maine (flyer/poster), 2003

Maine's Salt Marshes: Their Functions, Values and Restoration, 2003

The Maine Shore Steward (newsletter), 2002 and 2003

Watershed Pledge Book, 2002



Conferences Supported

First International Cold Climate Stormwater Management Conference, 2003

Governor's Conference on Tourism, 2003

Maine Beaches Conference, 2002 and 2003

Maine Fishermen's Forum (and scholarship), 2002 and 2003

Maine Land Trust Conference, 2002 and 2003

Maine Water Conference, 2002 and 2003

Nor'Easter Ocean Sciences Bowl, 2002 and 2003

New England Estuarine Research Society—Semi-annual Meeting, Spring 2002

Planning for Prosperity II—Hancock County, 2003

Regional Watershed Forums, 2002

Southern Maine Children's Water Festival, 2002 and 2003



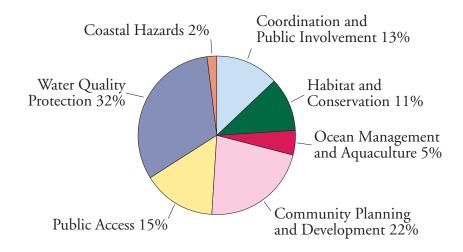
The International Cold Climate Stormwater Management Conference in Portland was the first of its kind in North America.



2002-2003 Budget



Allocation of Maine Coastal Program Funds 2002-2003



Source of Maine Coastal Program Funds 2002-2003

	2002	2003
Base Program Funds:*	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 2,000,000
rogram Enhancement Funds:**	413,000	413,000
Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Funds	:*** 281,000	281,000
tate and Other Matching Funds:	2,281,000	2,834,054
Total:	\$ 4,975,000	\$ 5,528,056
*C17 Management Art Service 206		
*Coastal Zone Management Act, Section 306 **Coastal Zone Management Act, Section 309		
**Coastal Zone Management Act, Section 310		

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